

September 11, 1997

Superfund Fact Sheet

BUNKER HILL UPDATE

KELLOGG, IDAHO

This fact sheet is a general update of major site-wide projects that have been taking place this summer. Also, don't miss the upcoming Superfund Task Force meeting that will be scheduled in early-to-mid-October. As always, the primary topic for the Fall task force meeting will be the results of the annual Blood Lead Screening Survey conducted this past summer. Meeting date and locations will be announced in local papers and on the radio soon. Your attendance and involvement is always welcome and appreciated!

Cleanup Work Moves Along

Construction activities are moving at a fast pace at the Bunker Hill Superfund Site. The haul road, which runs along I-90, is about 75% complete and is expected to be finished by the end of the month. Dust suppression remains a priority for contractors as the haul road nears completion. Instead of using oil to suppress the dust, contractors have been using a magnesium chloride solution to "bond" the dust with moisture. Magnesium chloride is a form of salt and is environmentally safer to use than oil. Please call **Nancy Wilson**, EPA Community Relations Coordinator, at **1-800-424-4EPA**, or **Jerry Cobb**, Panhandle Health District, at **(208) 783-0707**, if you have any concerns or questions related to haul road construction.

Tailings Removals

Excavation of mine tailings from the Smelterville flats continues on the south side of I-90 and will begin on the north side of I-90 later this Fall. In general, contractors have been instructed to excavate down to four feet. Areas showing contamination at levels deeper than four feet are excavated deeper until removed. After excavation, the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality (IDEQ), the Core of Engineers, and EPA inspects areas to ensure that work is done properly.

In this situation, tailings removal is not simply a matter of moving dirt. Contractors must drain water from the soil and tailings in order to dry the tailings for a more efficient removal. The drained water is pumped and discharged into West Page Swamp so that sediments can settle prior to discharging the water into the Coeur d'Alene River. In areas that will be used for future redevelopment, contractors are backfilling with clean material.

Milo Creek

Milo Creek remediation will be addressed in two phases. The first phase, short-term, emergency construction, is currently underway so that the creek will be redirected and stabilized before the winter months. The second phase, a long-term, permanent fix is also underway. Contractors have begun designs for a permanent system that will stabilize the entire creek channel, from upper Milo down to the Coeur d'Alene River. The State of Idaho is leading the design process; however, the EPA and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) have been working with the state to support design efforts. Design work will take place over the Fall and Winter and bids for construction work are expected to go out next Spring. The estimated cost of first phase construction will be

about \$288,000 and will be funded by FEMA. The second phase of the project is expected to cost between \$5 to \$7 million and will be funded by the state, several federal agencies (including EPA), local governments, and the mining company responsible for the upper portion of Milo Creek. EPA and NRCS are working with the owner of the new Bunker Hill mine to ensure that long-term cleanup responsibilities associated with upper Milo are addressed properly.

Due to contamination caused by the Milo Creek flood, between 10 to 15 residential yards will be remediated this Fall. FEMA is paying for the cleanup of these yards and the Panhandle Health District will be supervising the project. FEMA is also paying for the cleanup of several right-of-ways that were contaminated by flooding.

Please note that other yards in the district will be remediated by the Upstream Mining Group (UMG) as scheduled over the next two summers. If you have questions about Milo Creek yard remediation, please call **Jerry Cobb**, Panhandle Health District, at **208-783-0707**.

Yard Remediation Update

Thus far, UMG has remediated 155 residential properties north of I-90. In addition, UMG has cleaned 19 commercial properties and 4 right-of-ways. The 1997 cleanup goal continues to be the completion of 200 residential properties.

Cleanup at Kellogg City Park & Railroad Right-of-Ways Near Completion

The remediation of Kellogg City Park is nearing completion as the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) and Upstream Mining Group (UMG) continue to backfill the excavated park with clean soil. Remediation of the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-ways is complete from Elizabeth Park to Hill Street in Kellogg and remediation continues adjacent to the park and towards the west end of Kellogg. The railroad right-of-ways will undergo beautification through funding by a grant from the Department

of Transportation - the City of Kellogg applied for the grant and is spearheading the implementation of the beautification project.

In addition, IDEQ, EPA and the UPRR have signed an agreement that will provide the City of Kellogg an escrow account of \$204,000 for future greenbelt remediation.

Other Updates

Phosphate Fertilizer Warehouse was demolished after delaying demolition in hopes of finding a potential owner. IDEQ worked with a number of potential parties over the last several years but a viable and timely offer was not made.

Copper Dross Flue Dust was moved to the Principal Threat Materials (PTM) containment cell after an unsuccessful attempt to find a responsible party to recycle the material. However, the Copper Dross Flue Dust is still available for use in the future.

Gulch cleanup work continues to move ahead as cleanup work is approximately 60 % complete. Excavation of contaminated soils from Government and Magnet Gulch continues and stream restoration work is underway in Government Gulch. Contaminated gulch soil is being hauled to the Smelter Area Closure.

The central treatment plant continues to treat acid mine drainage, decontamination water, and smelter complex runoff at a rate of approximately 20 million gallons per month.

Hillsides seed testing will begin in October. We will be testing feasibility and cost implications of using various aircraft to apply seed to the hillsides. The community will notice three types of air craft flying over the hillsides applying seed: fixed wing, helicopter, and helitanker.

Upcoming Later This Fall

When a cleanup action or decision is significantly altered, EPA must publish a document called an Explanation of Significant Differences (ESD) to record the change. Later this Fall, EPA will be publishing an ESD that will cover a variety of changes to the Non-Populated Record of Decision. Items that will be covered include, but are not limited to, stack demolition, hillsides remediation approaches, increased tailings removals on the flats, and a proposed change in vegetated stream corridors. Stay tuned for more information about the upcoming ESD and a special fact sheet that will summarize issues covered in the document.

As mentioned earlier, a Superfund Task Force Meeting will take place in early-to-mid-October. Meeting date and location will be announced locally in news papers and on the radio. Please call Jerry Cobb at (208) 783-0707 for more information about the meeting.

Your Right to Know

For more information about the Bunker Hill site and access to all public documents related to the site, you can visit the following information repositories:

Kellogg Public Library, 16 West Market, Kellogg
Idaho 83837

Pinehurst/ Kingston Library, 107 Main Street,
Pinehurst, Idaho 83850

EPA Region 10 Records Center, 1200 6th Avenue,
Seattle, Washington, 98101

EPA Toll Free number (1-800-424-4372)

Please feel free to stop by the **Superfund Project Office** located at 1005 West McKinley Avenue in Kellogg for information, as well.

Site History

The Bunker Hill site spans 21 square miles in the heart of the Silver Valley in northern Idaho. The communities of Kellogg, Smelterville, Wardner, Pinehurst, Page, Ross Ranch and Elizabeth Park live within the site's boundaries, totaling over 6000 in population.

Mining activities began in the late 1800's in the Silver Valley and in 1917 smelter operations began at the Bunker Hill Site. In 1968, Gulf Resources and Chemical Corporation (Gulf) purchased the Bunker Hill facility. In 1973, a fire at the baghouse (a system of cloth bags that filtered lead-contaminated dust from the smokestacks) all but destroyed the smelter's air pollution control capacity. As a result of the fire, lead emissions from the smelter increase dramatically. Less than a year after the fire, a sick child tested extremely high for lead contamination. Local officials then began testing other children in the valley and found that many had very high levels of lead in their blood. As a result, the Panhandle Health District and the State of Idaho developed a lead intervention program and a yearly blood screening program to monitor area children.

Contamination includes tons of mine tailings that were directly deposited into the Coeur d'Alene River, causing major contamination of heavy metals throughout the floodplain. The primary contaminant in the valley is lead. Lead causes brain and central nervous system damage, chronic kidney and cardiovascular disorders and impaired fetal development.

In 1983, Bunker Hill was added to the National Priorities List (NPL), a list of the nation's most hazardous waste sites. EPA has identified 17 private companies believed to be responsible for site cleanup, some of whom are working in partnership with EPA and the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) to support cleanup.

Cleanup decisions are documented in two Record of Decisions (RODs). In 1991, the Populated ROD was signed, covering residential & commercial yard cleanup and in 1992, the Non-Populated ROD was signed, documenting cleanup decisions for the rest of the Bunker Hill site.

Questions or Concerns?

Please call either :

Jerry Cobb, Panhandle Health District in Kellogg at (208) 783-0707

or

***Nancy Wilson, EPA Community Relations Coordinator in Seattle, toll-free at
1-800-424-4372 or directly at (206) 553-1237.***

***For those with impaired hearing or speech, please contact EPA's Telecommunications Device
for the Deaf (TDD) at (206) 553-1698. To ensure effective communication with everyone,
additional services can be made by calling EPA's toll-free number at 1-800-424-4372.***

**Web Surfing for EPA Region 10: Check out our homepage at:
*<http://www.epa.gov/r10earth>***



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KELLOGG, IDAHO***